

# **USAF, Dover AFB advise state agencies that PFAS chemicals exceeding EPA health advisory found in four wells near base**

**DOVER** – The US Air Force and Dover Air Force Base have notified Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and Division of Public Health that four wells near the base sampled by the federal government for perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), including perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), have returned elevated levels of PFOS and PFOA above the US Environmental Protection Agency's health advisory for these substances of 70 parts per trillion (ppt).

Because of the elevated PFOS and PFOA levels, the owners of the four wells – which provide water to a shopping center with five businesses, two residences, and an office building – have been notified and provided with bottled water by Dover AFB. PFOS and PFOA are chemicals used in a variety of products that over time have become widely distributed in the environment – and have been found at Dover AFB and other air bases and airports in firefighting foam. The USAF and EPA have been working with DNREC and DPH to determine the impacts of PFOS and PFOA on private wells in proximity to the base.

A USAF fact sheet about the Dover AFB PFOS and PFOA sampling published in late spring said that groundwater samples collected in shallow monitoring wells on the base showed levels of PFOS and PFOA above EPA's 70 ppt health advisory. "Based on these results, actions have been undertaken to ensure that drinking water at DAFB and the surrounding community is not impacted," the fact sheet noted.

No PFOS or PFOA were detected in five nearby municipal water wells tested sampled in November 2014 by Dover AFB's water supplier, Tidewater Utilities. Tidewater sampled four on-base municipal supply wells and the off-base municipal supply well nearest the base. All of these wells draw water from a deep, confined aquifer, and there were no PFOS or PFOA detections in any of them.

Representatives from the USAF this year then began contacting owners and users of private or commercial wells on properties near the northwest and east boundaries of Dover AFB, and asking permission to take drinking water samples. The four private wells that returned elevated levels of PFOS and PFOA on July 12 are located along those boundaries.

The primary step necessary to protect the public's health from exposure to PFOS and PFOA in drinking water is to use an alternate water source until a permanent solution can be determined, which may consist of treatment, connecting to a new system, or other solution. DPH encourages the impacted businesses, office building, and dwellings in the affected area to use the bottled water provided by the DAFB until a permanent solution is in place. Anyone with specific health concerns or questions about potential health impacts is encouraged to contact their primary care provider. General questions about health effects from, and exposure to PFAS can call DPH at 302-744-4546.

For more information, please contact:  
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